

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the Specification as follows, wherein additions are shown with underlining and deletions are shown with strike-through formatting (or between double brackets (“[[]]”)).

At page 1, after the title, delete the heading “Description”.

At page 1, after the title, insert --**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**--.

At page 1, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 13 as follows:

A method of the ~~generic~~ general type is known from ~~the international patent application bearing the publication number~~ WO 02/37425 A1. This publication discloses a method for providing postal items with postage indicia, mailing data being acquired in a first computer and the mailing data being processed in a second computer. In this process, the second computer generates individualized data for every single postal item as a function of the mailing data. The individualized data is incorporated into postage indicia whose printing is controlled by the first computer.

At page 1, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 20 as follows:

~~German preliminary published application~~ DE 102 11 728 A1 discloses a method and a device for picking packing goods. Here, picking packing containers are transported under computer control to picking packing areas, and a warehouse management control unit transmits order data to a material flow control computer and the material flow control computer controls destinations of the picking packing containers in such a way that the picking packing containers are transported to picking packing areas where the goods to be picking packing are located.

At page 2, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 1 as follows:

~~The international patent application bearing the publication number~~ WO 00/34899 A1 discloses an automatic auction procedure. In this auction procedure, bidding

information from bidders is compared in an automated process, in which the maximum price that has been bid by the bidders is determined.

At page 2, please amend the paragraphs beginning at line 6 as follows:

SUMMARY GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The invention ~~is based on the objective of further developing~~ develops a method of the generic type in such a way that goods can be prepared for placement into the postal items.

According to the invention, ~~this objective is achieved in conjunction with the generic part of claim 1 by~~ a method for producing a postal item whereby order data for the postal item that is to be printed and/or sent is generated in an order component including the following steps:

- receiving electronic order data;
- breaking down the order data into address information of a recipient and a goods identification code;
- preparing the address information in a form that can be linked to the goods;
- linking the goods to the address information, and
- delivering the goods linked to the address information as a postal item.

It is advantageous to carry out the method in such a way that the goods identification code is transmitted to a warehouse management control unit.

In An an especially preferred embodiment of the invention, ~~is characterized in that~~ a postage indicium is generated, taking into account the address information of the recipient.

At page 3, please amend the paragraphs beginning at line 1 as follows:

The term “postage indicium” is not to be construed in any limiting fashion whatsoever. According to the invention, ~~it~~ this term encompasses known modalities of franking as well as other indicia that allow a further transport of the postal items or that substantiate a payment of the shipment of the postal items. Hence, in particular, the term “postage indicium” also encompasses delivery slips for postal items.

Moreover, it is advantageous for the order data to be stored in a transaction computer.

This embodiment of the invention allows an even more flexible use of the method as well as an even greater degree of automation.

~~In An an~~ an especially preferred embodiment, ~~of this is characterized in that~~ the transaction computer performs an automatic comparison between the stock of goods and one or more pending orders.

Furthermore, it is advantageous for the warehouse management control unit to transmit the order data to the material flow control computer and for the material flow control computer to control the material flow in such a way that the goods and/or additional goods are placed into ~~picking~~ packing containers and/or directly into a transport container provided for the shipment as a postal item.

A likewise advantageous embodiment of the invention is achieved ~~in that~~ wherein the transaction computer controls an automated auction procedure.

At page 4, please amend the paragraphs beginning at line 24 as follows:

If postal or logistics service providers require or remunerate a presorting of the postal items that have been dropped off for delivery, then, if a goods management system is coupled to a franking system, this can be ~~effectuated~~ effected by accessing sorting-relevant address information (e.g. postal code) and mailing information (e.g. dimensions/ weight).

At page 6, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 1 as follows:

In an especially advantageous embodiment of the invention, the use of the PC franking translates into considerable process optimization when the autonomous franking process, for example, in a postal station, is eliminated. After all, if the possibilities of system integration are utilized and postal items or letters are also franked directly in one step during the computer-aided generation, then there is no longer a need for a dedicated postal station for outgoing mail.

At page 7, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 8 as follows:

The result of the embedding of the franking is that the franking becomes a module that is controlled by the goods management system of the sender. When implemented in the software, this means that the procedure of franking with the transfer of the requisite parameters is called up by the goods management system and the result of the franking is received and processed by the goods management system. Since the entire control is carried out by the goods management system, the actual printing procedure of applying the postage indicium is often dispensed with within the scope of the franking. In solutions such as PC franking or IT franking, ~~said~~ the postage indicium is generated as a data record in the franking module and sent to the goods management system as feedback. Only the goods management system controls – optionally in just one printing procedure – the combined print-out of the actual letter, the print-out of the recipient address and the print-out of the postage indicium.

At page 9, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 11 as follows:

In An an especially preferred embodiment of this device, ~~is characterized in that~~ the means to link the goods to the address information is a printer.

At page 9, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 13 as follows:

In Another another likewise advantageous embodiment of the device, ~~is configured in such a way that~~ the means to link the goods to the address information is a

transmitter that is designed in such a way that it can transmit the address information to a transponder that can be affixed to the goods.

At page 9, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 23 as follows:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Additional advantages, special features and practical embodiments of the invention can be ~~gleaned from the subordinate claims and from the presentation below~~ following description of preferred embodiments making reference to the drawing figures.

At page 10, please amend the paragraph beginning at line as follows:

The drawings show the following:

Figure 1 is a flow chart showing the production of a postal item with a separate franking step;

Figure 2 is a block diagram of a method according to the invention with a franking step integrated into the production and into the addressing of the postal item;

Figure 3 illustrates the basic principle of a ring process used according to the invention;

Figure 4 illustrates a schematic diagram of a refinement of the ring process depicted in Figure 3 to form interlinked ring processes.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

In especially preferred examples, the ring processes are characterized in that the first process step starts, for example, with the customer of an on-line shop, with a person interested in some real estate or with a person interested in a product that is going to be auctioned. In contrast to traditional business models, here, it is such a customer or interested person who initiates an electronic process that has immediate effects on the electronic

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administration system of a seller. Without involvement on the part of the seller, a customer enters his/her complete master data into the administration system of the seller, expresses an interest to make a purchase or places a bid in an auction.